

The present invention relates to a method of enhancing growth of plants. This involves applying a hypersensitive response elicitor polypeptide or protein in a non-infectious form to a plant or plant seed under conditions effective to enhance growth of the plant or plants produced from the plant seed. Alternatively, transgenic plants or transgenic plant seeds transformed with a DNA molecule encoding a hypersensitive response elicitor polypeptide or protein can be provided and the transgenic plants or plants resulting from the transgenic plant seeds are grown under conditions effective to enhance plant growth.